

THE SUMMIT TONE OF A VEDIC WORD

1. The general tendency of an Indo-European word-accent¹ is that in a polysyllabic word, there is always one accented syllable which, by its accentuation, takes precedence of the rest. This tendency is presumably known by the parallelisms between individual facts of Greek and Vedic accentual systems.

2.1 Pāṇini (= P) teaches in the rule (A 6,1,158): *anudāttam padam ekavarjam*, that a word with the exception of one syllable is unaccented, that is to say, in a word only one syllable is accented. By the word *ekam* in the rule should be understood « the one » vowel for which a single *udatta* or the primary *svarita* is explicitly enjoined in the specific accentual rules of P². With the exception of this single accented vowel, the remaining syllables of a word are gravely intoned (*anudatta-s*).

2.2 The purpose served by this rule is concisely summed up by the following verse given in the *Mahābhāṣyam* (III 97.8-9):

*āgamasya vikārasya prakṛteḥ pratyayasya ca /
prthak-svaranivṛttyartham ekavarjam padasvaraḥ //*

The rule which restricts a single accent in a word, has for its recognised function the elimination of the separate, individual accent of an *āgama* (augment), *vikāra* (alternative element), *prakṛti* (nucleus) and the *pratyaya* (suffix) simultaneously.

3. Kātyāyana defines word-accent in the first two aphorisms of the second chapter of the *Sukla-yajurveda-prātiśākhya* as follows:

svarita-varjam ekodāttam padam (ii.1)
and *anudāttam* (ii.2).

1. With the term word-accent is associated the idea of prominence. See MARTINET, *Elements of General Linguistics*, 3.31 and SCHMITT, *Musikalischer Akzent...*, 6.

2. See *Svarasiddhāntacandrikā* (SSC), p. 20, Ed. K.A.S. Sastri, Annamalai University, 1936.

With the exception of the (primary) *svarita*, a word (is the domain of) one (and only one) *udātta* (ii.1), (and the remaining syllables of the word are) *anudātta-s* (ii.2). These two *sūtra-s* remind us of P's rule A 6,1,158. Accordingly the description of a Vedic word-accent is that each word, with the exclusion of the independent *svarita*, is the domain of a single *udātta*. Obviously there is, in each word, but one vowel which has the *udātta* or the primary *svarita*, and the remaining syllables of the (polysyllabic) word are atonic.

4.1 In the *TéXnē Grammatikē*, Dionysius Thrax (c. 100 B.C.)³ mentions that « the grammatical word corresponds to the phonologically definable domain of one and no more than one acute or circumflex accent (except in the case of enclitics and words, immediately preceding enclitics, and perhaps of oxytonic words in non-final position...) ».

4.2 Halikarnasos (34-12 B.C.) says that « while in polysyllabic words, whatever their number of syllables, there is but one syllable that has the acute accent (high pitch) among the remaining grave ones »⁴.

5. It emerges from the facts presented briefly in paras 2 to 4 that a Vedic (polysyllabic) word has one *udātta* or *svarita* as its summit tone, the remaining syllables of the word being grave with the exception of enclitics.

6.1 The early Indoeuropeanists, considering the freedom of position of the summit tone for the IE word, found that a comparison of the accented with Greek yielded the result that the Vedic accent has preserved very clearly the old unfettered word-accent of the *ursprache*. This summit tone is the *udātta* in Vedic and the acute in Greek, which is shown by etymological equivalents: Germ. *hlūda-*, OIA *śrutá-*, Av. *srūto*, Grk. *Xlutós*, Lat. (*in*)*clutus*⁵. Since the Sanskrit and Greek grammarians (cf. P's rule A 1,2,29 with Thrax in the *Ars Grammatica* 6,15.7.2) have described the *udātta* as the utterance of a vocalic phoneme in a higher key, it is regarded as « the most frequent and principal accent »⁶. Following this theory, Wackernagel⁷ assumed that the *udātta* syllable might have manifested the highest pitch originally and that for the comparison with related languages only the complete basic form with the *udātta* is to be taken into consideration. But it should be stated here that while the R̥gvedic *udātta* holds its imperial position, Greek changes

3. R. H., ROBINS, *Dionysius Thrax...*, TPS, 1957, 93.

4. STURTEVANT, *The Pronunciation of Greek and Latin*, 98.

5. Cf. HIRT, *Der Akzent*, 45 f. for a list of etymological correspondences.

6. WHITNEY, JAOS, 1861, 198. He holds the view that the *svarita* was far from being the principal accent. (See his notes under AVPr. III, 65). For a criticism of Whitney's notion, that the *svarita* is an intermediate tone between *udātta* and *anudātta*, read K.A.S. Sastri's Introduction to SSC, p. 48 f.

7. *Altindische Grammatik* I, Sect. 245 d.

its acute, under certain phonological and morphological conditions to the circumflex intonation⁸.

6.2 As regards the *svarita* intonation — as has been stated in the *vājasaneyi-Prātiśākhya* (i.iii): *Eka-pade nīca-pūrvah sayavo jātyah* — it occurs mostly in syllables where the vowel is preceded by the palato-semivowel «y» or the labial «v». And this y and v is a product of sandhi from an original *ī* and *ú* respectively, since the accent, as warranted by diachronic evidence, goes back to a time when the *svarita* was pronounced as two peak-points. Furthermore, the old Indo-European rhythmic law requires that y and v are to be dissolved into *íy* and *úv* respectively. Consequently the words which have the *svarita* as the *Hauptton* are to be transcribed as * *sú-ār* > *svâr*; * *kú-à* > *kvâ*; *vīri-ām* > *vīryām*.

7. But from the synchronistic point of view, the autonomous, genuine *svarita* must be regarded as the summit tone, in the following select examples drawn from the *Samhitā* or *Brāhmaṇa* texts:

kartavyām TS 1,5,2,4 (A 3,1,96; 6,1,185)

karmanyām RV 1,91,20

kāryām TB 1,3,1,5 (A 3,1,124; 6,1,185)

vīryām RV 1,57,5 (*PhitS* IV.9: *bilva-barsva-vīryāṇi chandasi*; see SSC to A 6,2,120)

svāh RV 1,50,5 (*PhitS* iv.6; SSC: 284).

8.1 We shall now focus our attention on the evidence furnished by P. and K *ā t y ā y a n a* (the *Vārttikakāra*) to show that the *svarita* too appears as the independent, summit tone, in certain typical Vedic formations like the *udātta*.

P teaches in the rule, *tavyat-tavyānīyarah* (A 3,1,96) that with *tavyaT*, *tavya-* and *anīya* are formed gerundives denoting action, object (A 3,4,70) and diverse other senses (A 3,3,113). The *Kṛt* derivatives in *tavya-* are paroxytonic, since the suffix initial is accented through the force of the rule, *ādyudāttaś ca* (A 3,1,3) whereas those in *tavyaT* are perispomena which is indicated by the exponent /T/ according to the rule, *tit sva-ritam* (A 6,1,185). Some typical instances are: *kartāvya-*, *gantāvya-* (paroxytonic), and *kartavyā-* (: √ *kṛ*), *janitavyā-* (: *jan*), *hotavyā-* (: √ *hu*) (perispomena).

8.2 The perispomenon *kartavyām* occurs in TS 1,5,2,4: *Kartavyām yājuḥ*. The perispomenon seems to belong exclusively to the property of the Black *Yajurveda Samhitā* texts⁹, while the *Brāhmaṇa-Āraṇyaka* texts¹⁰ have employed the paroxytonic *kartāvya-*. Thus P. has accounted for this diachronic accentological position, since he has indicated paroxytonesis by teaching the IT-less *tāvya-* suffix.

8. KURYLOWICZ, *On the development of the Greek Intonation*, Language, VIII, 200-10.

9. TS 1,5,2,4: *KāṭhaS* 26,7; 29,5; 28,10; 33,4; 34,4, *KKS* 41,5; 6.

10. AB 1,11; 2,1. *ŚB* 1,2,5,21. *GB* 2,1,15. But *kartavyā* in *TB* 3,8,3,3 (?).

8.3 Kātyāyana in the *vārttika*- *vases tavyat kartari ñic ca* (ad A 3,1,96; VMB II 81.19) teaches the suffixation of *tavyaT* to the root *vas-* «to dwell» in expressing the agent sense, and the root is *ṛddhied* (A 7,2,116). The gerundive *vāstavyāḥ* is attested once in the TS 5,2,8,5: *vāstavyô vā eṣā yāt*, which treats the gerundive as a perispomenon. This is in perfect agreement with Kātyāyana's teaching which proves to the hilt that the *svārīta* is as much a summit tone as the *udātta*.

8.4 In addition P. teaches in the rule *ṛ-halor nyat* (A 3,1,124) the addition of *Nyat* to roots ending in *ṛ* (short or long) or a consonant. Thus we obtain: *kāryām* «must be made», *hāryām* «must be taken away», *dhāryām* «must be held» and *vākyām* «must be uttered», all of which are perispomena through the force of A 6,1,185. In the following rules, *orāvaśyake* (3,1,125) and *āsu-yu-vapi-rapi-lapi-trapi-camaś ca* (126), P. teaches *Nyat*-gerundives such as *pāvyām* «what must be purified by necessity» (125), *āsāvyām* «must be distilled» (126) and other gerundives which are perispomena.

8.5 If P. did not accept the *svārīta* playing the role of a summit tone of a Vedic word, he would not at all have structured the exponent */T/* and the accent rule A 6,1,185. He has obviously accepted the *svārīta* as an independent tone, and his rules, 3,1,96; 124; 125 and 6,1,185 are clearly meant to take care of such Vedic formations which are perispomena.

9. The binary opposition between Vedic *kartavyām* (perispomenon) and later *kartāvyam* (paroxytone); Vedic *vīryām* (perispomenon) and classical *vīryam*¹¹ (barytone), and the arguments contained in paras 7-8 demonstrate the fact that the *svārīta* must also be regarded as the *Hauptton* of a Vedic word.

10. To sun up:

- (i) We learn from the IE comparative linguistic evidence, the account in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* [= A] and the *Suklayajurvedaprātiśākhya*, that a polysyllabic word has one *udātta* or the primary *svārīta* as its summit tone, the remaining syllables of the word being atonic;
- (ii) Synchronically speaking, the *svārīta* must be regarded as the summit tone of certain Vedic words (*kartavyām* and others);
- (iii) P's teaching of the rules A 3,1,96; 124; 125; 6,1,185 and Kātyāyana's *vārttikam* (ad A 3,1,96) prove to the hilt that *svārīta*, like the *udātta*, is also a *Hauptton*; and

11. SSC: 168, s.v. A 6,2,120 where Sṛnīvāsa glosses: *tena «vīryam ṛñkte» ityādaḥ antasvarītatvaṁ siddham / Loke tu vīryaśabdasya ādyudātta eva /*

- (iv) The monumental work of P. remains an important source of factual information and a necessary tool for serious work on Indo-European linguistics.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>A</i>	Aṣṭādhyāyī
<i>AB</i>	Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa
<i>GB</i>	Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa
<i>KKS</i>	Kaṣiṣṭhala-Kaṭha-Saṁhitā
<i>KāṭhaS</i>	Kāṭhaka-Saṁhitā
<i>P</i>	Pāṇini
<i>PhitS</i>	Phit-Sūtra
<i>RV</i>	R̥gveda-Saṁhitā
<i>SSC</i>	Svarasiddhānta-candrikā
<i>SB</i>	Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa
<i>TB</i>	Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa
<i>TS</i>	Taittirīya-Saṁhitā